

***Hypericum majus* (Gray) Britt.**
Canadian St. John's-Wort
Hypericaceae (St. John's-wort Family)

Status: State Sensitive
Rank: G5S2

General Description: From Hitchcock et al. (1961): Perennial with short leafy rhizomes, upright stems 4 to 20 inches tall, simple or branched above. Leaves $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch long, lanceolate to oblong, rounded, 5 to 7 nerved. Cymes inconspicuously bracteate. Flowers $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, the petals about equal to the lanceolate sepals. Stamens 15-35, the filaments almost capillary, distinct. Capsule 1-celled, blunt. Styles 3, short. Seeds yellow, $<\frac{1}{16}$ inch long, longitudinally striate and finely transversely corrugate.

Identification Tips: *Hypericum majus* is easily distinguished from other species in the *Hypericum* genus by its petal size (less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch), stamens (less than 50), and its erect stems (over 4 inches tall).

Phenology: Flowers July through September.

Range: Occurs in British Columbia east to Quebec, southward through Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Iowa, and Colorado. The species has a scattered distribution in Washington; currently known from Benton, Franklin, Skagit, and Spokane counties and historically known from King and Pend Oreille counties.

Habitat: The taxon grows along ponds, lakesides or other low, wet places. Many of the Washington occurrences are associated with riparian habitats. Associated species include *Equisetum* sp., *Juncus bufonius*, *J. tenuis*, *J. articulatus*, *Cyperus bipartitus*, *Luzula parviflora*, *Carex vulpinoidea*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Phalaris arundinacea*, *Helenium autumnale*, *Myosotis laxa*, and *Plantago major*. Elevation in Washington ranges from 100 to 2300 feet.

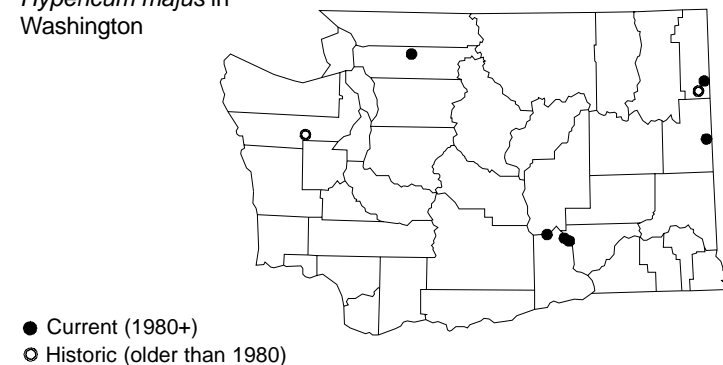
Ecology: *Hypericum majus* is identified as a facultative wetland species (USFWS 1988). In Washington, it occurs in habitats that are completely submerged during portions of the growing season and/or are periodically inundated as part of the water management related to hydroelectric dams. Significant changes to the hydrologic regime would likely be detrimental to the species.

Hypericum majus
Canadian St. John's-Wort



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Known distribution of
Hypericum majus in
Washington



Hypericum majus
Canadian St. John's-Wort



Photo by
Robert Moseley - IDCDC



Photo by
Katy Beck

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State Status Comments: There are only a few widely scattered, extant populations in the state.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory is needed along the Columbia and Pend Oreille Rivers. Historical sites should be revisited. This taxon can be easily overlooked due to its small size and association with dense, diverse vegetation.

Threats and Management Concerns: Threats to the taxon include hydrologic changes and recreation. It is likely that other populations of this species were lost due to dam construction along the Columbia and Pend Oreille Rivers. Known populations are being invaded by purple loosestrife which should be controlled without affecting *Hypericum majus*. *Phalaris arundinacea* may also pose a challenge to management for this species.

References:

Hitchcock, C. L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1961. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 3: Saxifragaceae to Ericaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 614 pp.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1988. National list of vascular plant species that occur in wetlands. USFWS Biological Report 88 (24).